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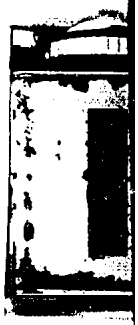

DEVELOPMENT OF THE GDR COAL AND POWER INDUSTRIES DURING THE 1955 PLAN YEAR

Taegliche Rundschau
Berlin, 19 January 1955

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Coal

The 1954 plan goals of the GDR coal industry were not achieved. Although, according to current information, the black-coal (Steinkohle) industry achieved 101.4 percent fulfillment of its plan, the brown-coal industry fulfilled the briquette production plan only 97.5 percent and the plan for the output of raw coal only 96.2 percent. There are various reasons for the nonfulfillment of the plans of the brown-coal industry. Freezing weather during the spring and flood waters during the summer resulted in considerable production losses. In addition, there was a lag in the creation of new capacities, and a number of large conveyers and briquette factories were not put it operation on schedule in the Senftenberg mining district. Also, there were shortcomings in the organization of work and a relatively high rate of breakdowns and shutdowns in mining operations and briquette production.

The 1955 plan goals provide for considerable increases in the mining of brown coal and in the production of briquettes. Compared with actual production in 1954, briquette production is to be increased by 8.2 percent and output of raw brown coal by 10.7 percent in 1955. For the first time, the output of raw brown coal will exceed 200 million tons.

Brown coal in the GDR is mined mainly in open-pit mines. Several years are required for a brown-coal open-pit mine to be opened and to start operating. A good deal of this time is spent in the removal of overburden so that an adequate reserve of coal can be uncovered. This peculiarity of brown-coal mining illustrates the relation between the 1955 plan goals and the goals of the long-range plan for the brown-coal industry. The long-range plan provides for the shifting of the center of brown-coal mining from the Central German brown-coal districts to the Lausitz region (i.e., the Senftenberg district). It is important that the long-range plan be taken into consideration in setting up the plan goals for 1955, not only because the largest reserves of coal are located in the Senftenberg district, but also because the ratio of overburden to coal in this area is an unfavorable 3.5:1, in contrast to about 1.5:1 in the Central German districts.

For the most part, the uncovered reserves in the Central German districts of Halle and Borna will be exhausted during the 1955 plan year, whereas the Senftenberg district will increase its share in over-all production. The principal task of the Senftenberg district will be to increase the removal of overburden and to create larger reserves of coal ready for mining. During 1955, about 106 million cubic meters of overburden will have to be removed in the Borna district and about 87 million cubic meters in the Halle district. In the Senftenberg district, however, more that 200 million cubic meters of overburden are to be removed. If coal output is increased during 1955 in the Central German districts and the removal of overburden is accelerated in the Senftenberg district, the necessary prerequisites will be achieved for increasing coal output during the second Five-Year Plan period.

Among the most important production tasks facing the brown-coal industry in 1955 are the following:

1. Take measures to ensure uninterrupted production and to reduce the number of breakdowns and shutdowns, especially in the transportation systems of mines. The number of derailments and collisions in the rail transportation systems must be reduced.

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2. Ensure the creation of the new capacities planned for 1955. The opening of new open-pit mines must be started promptly, especially in the Senftenberg district, and the completion and assembly of new equipment must be carried out on schedule. This new equipment includes conveyer bridges, putting-down machines, bucket excavators, rolling stock, tube driers, and briquette presses. The 1955 program and the production goals of future years will be seriously endangered unless the Main Administration for Brown Coal [in the Ministry of Heavy Industry] takes immediate action toward making up for arrears in project planning and in the conclusion of delivery contracts and work contracts.

3. Increase the degree of utilization of equipment in open-pit mines and briquette factories. During the 1955 plan year, the utilization of heavy equipment is to be increased by about 11 percent. In the removal of overburden, the average yearly capacity of excavators must be increased to 6,630 cubic meters per liter of bucket capacity in the Senftenberg district, to 3,470 cubic meters in the Halle district, and to 4,100 cubic meters in the Borna district. The [average yearly] capacity of coal mining equipment must be increased to 4,200 tons per liter of bucket capacity in the Senftenberg district, to 4,450 tons in the Halle district, and to 4,780 tons in the Borna district.

Electric Power

The 1954 plan for the production of electric power was fulfilled only about 96 percent. The 1954 Power Program, which provided for capacity increases totaling 740 megawatts, was only about 90 percent fulfilled. This means that the installed capacities of GDR power plants were increased by about 680 megawatts, or 15 percent, in one year. In spite of this accomplishment, the fixed target dates for putting new power-plant equipment in operation were not observed, and new installations were usually a few months late in being put in operation. While new equipment with a capacity of about 177 megawatts was put in operation during the first half, equipment with a capacity of 503 megawatts was put in operation on a trial basis during the second half. Furthermore, the periods for putting new installations in operation were too long, and the full capacities were not connected to the public network on schedule. Of the approximately 680 megawatts of new capacities, equipment with capacities of about 471 megawatts was operating on a continuous basis at the end of 1954. Equipment with a capacity of 209 megawatts was in operation on a trial basis, hence did not contribute fully to increasing total power-plant capacity.

In spite of these shortcomings, the total supply of electric power in 1954 increased considerably over that of the previous year. For example, precise measurements revealed that power output had increased by about 407 megawatts on the third Thursday in December, as compared with the same day of the previous year. Total production of electric power increased from about 24 billion kilowatt-hours in 1953 to more that 26 billion kilowatt-hours in 1954; average production per capita increased from 1,340 kilowatt-hours in 1953 to 1,440 kilowatt-hours in 1954. Domestic consumption of electric power per household increased from 417 kilowatt-hours to 437 kilowatt-hours during the same period. It is worth noting that production per capita and consumption per household are higher in the GDR than in West Germany.

Another indication of the improvements in the power situation is the fact that, in the entire GDR, excluding Berlin, electrical home appliances with a connected load of 567,000 kilowatts were sold on the market during the first three quarters of 1954. If it is assumed that a certain percentage of these appliances were put to use in the winter of 1954-1955, this explains why there have been difficulties this winter in supplying the economy and the population with electric

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power. Such an increase in the number of electrical appliances in use in GDR households will have a detrimental effect on the power supply situation unless discipline is exercised in the use of such appliances during periods of peak consumption.

The 1955 plan provides for an increase in the production of electric power amounting to 16.1 percent of actual 1954 production. This significant increase can be achieved only if the following main tasks are carried out by the power industry:

1. The 1955 Power Program must be fulfilled in its entirety. The plan calls for a capacity increase of 625 megawatts, including the increases carried over from 1954. The program includes the following projects: four turbosets with a total capacity of 100 megawatts for the Trattendorf Power Plant; six turbosets with capacities of 32 megawatts each for the Elbe Power Plant at Vockerode; capacity increase amounting to 75 megawatts at the Stalinstadt Power Plant; and installation of a number of large turbines at old power plants at Hirschfelde, Wolfen, Bitterfeld, Dresden, and the Buna Chemical Works in Schkopau.

To achieve this capacity increase, the 1955 Power Program includes fixed target dates for starting trial operations and for connecting installations to the public network.

2. The general repair program must be carefully carried out in 1955. Equipment accounting for about 30 percent of the total capacity will have to be overhauled so that capacity losses caused by unforeseen breakdowns can be reduced.

3. The production plan can be fulfilled and the power industry can operate at a profit if available capacities are fully utilized and if fuel is used economically.

4. During 1955, economy will have to be exercised in the consumption of electric power by industrial enterprises and by households. The government does not intend to restrict the further electrification of agriculture and households. In keeping with the New Course, electrical tools will continue to be supplied.

Manpower

The putting into operation of new open-pit mines and power plants will result in considerable increases in the 1955 manpower requirements of the coal and power industries. The coal-mining industry will require about 5,200 additional workers, the potash-mining industry about 2,400, and the power industry about 1,000. One of the most important tasks of the coal and power industries will be to procure this additional manpower from those sectors of the economy which are in a position to release some of their workers.

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